

## —Today's Advancement

### David



by Mr. David Tan  
My cancer diagnosis happened after I had aortic heart valve surgery. That was in 2001. Unfortunately, I had complications requiring months in the hospital. Prior to 2001, I had never been hospitalized and was a very healthy man. I always had my annual physical health exams, including PSA testing. But after my heart surgery, I did not have my PSA blood levels checked. In 2002, my urologist informed me my PSA levels had increased. Without delay, I was referred to Dr. Ucar at Pacific Shores Medical Group for a hematology/oncology work up. Soon after, I was told I had malignant prostate cancer. Surgery was the first medical intervention introduced to me, however, after my overwhelming experience with surgery in 2001, it was my last treatment choice. Dr. Ucar listened to my concerns and empathized with me. He agreed it may be possible to avoid surgery and offered other effective treatment options. I appreciated his consideration. I began radiation, hormone therapy, and Zometa®, to strengthen my bones. Today, I am doing very well, exercising daily, enjoying my six children and 16 grandchildren, and soon will be celebrating my 50th wedding anniversary with my loving wife, Zenaida.

by Kalust Ucar, MD

Physicians are always taught not just to treat the disease but to treat the patient. The medical approach to each illness is usually well defined. The challenge is how to tailor a treatment so it fits best for the specific condition of a given individual. I saw Mr. Tan initially for blood problems when he was having an unusually difficult and prolonged recovery after heart surgery. When he was diagnosed with prostate cancer, the thought of surgery was more overwhelming to him than the diagnosis of cancer. Most cancers carry a poor prognosis when surgical removal of cancer can not be done. Advanced prostate cancer can be controlled with hormonal treatments for years. Mr. Tan has done very well for more than three years and counting.

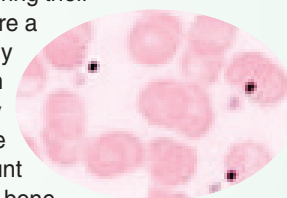


## Low Platelet Count

### Do You Have A Tendency To Bleed?

### Think Platelets

Bleeding disorders are common. Many people have a tendency to bleed with skin bruises, nose or gum bleeding. Some people may lose blood in their urine or stool. Young women can present with heavy bleeding during their menstrual cycles. Patients with bleeding problems require a careful examination by their doctors. There are many reasons why patients bleed easily. Platelets play an essential role in blood clotting. Unfortunately, many medications can paralyze the platelets and cause bleeding. Many patients can have low platelet count resulting from decreased platelet production in the bone marrow. The bone marrow may stop making enough platelets because of the side effects of medications (antibiotics, medications for stomach ulcer, arthritis and cancer treatment), exposure to radiation, infections (HIV, hepatitis), leukemia or other cancers that affect the bone marrow. On the other hand, patients can develop low platelet count as a result of increased platelet destruction either by their own immune system or an enlarged spleen. Most of the time low platelet counts can be treated relatively easily. However, low platelet count can be the indication of more serious underlying problems that require careful evaluation and prompt treatment.



## Our Doctor Is IN: Treatments For Prostate Cancer

by Dr. Hank Yang

Early stage prostate cancer is confined to the prostate gland and can be effectively treated by surgery or radiation. When it progresses and spreads beyond the prostate gland, it requires medical treatments. Prostate cancer cells require testosterone, the male hormone, to grow. Treatments like Lupron and Casodex® that block testosterone are very effective in treating prostate cancer. The majority of prostate cancer patients will become resistant to these treatments. Progress is being made in treating patients with hormone-refractory prostate cancer. Several studies conducted recently showed that chemotherapy with Taxol® or Taxotere® is quite effective in treating prostate cancer that has become hormone refractory. New target-specific drugs that identify only cancer cells are being tested. The early results from some of these studies are promising, and the future looks better for prostate cancer patients.

## Facts About Prostate Cancer

- In the USA, prostate cancer is the most common cancer in men.
- Blood PSA test is effective in detecting prostate cancer in its early stages.
- Men who are 50 years or older should have annual blood PSA levels checked. African American men or men with family history of prostate cancer should start PSA testing at the age of 40.
- PSA value higher than 4.0 may require a needle biopsy from the prostate gland to rule out prostate cancer.
- Fast rising PSA over time even though the absolute level is low warrants further evaluation.

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